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Author: Danuta Gabryś-Barker, Adam Wojtaszek

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Preface

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition has already entered its fourth consecutive year of publication. Founded in 2015, when very few journals of a related profile were available in Poland, it filled a niche recognized by not only Polish, but also international scholars. Following the publication of the first issue, it became clear that its scope would attract submissions from many specialists and researchers around the world. Thus far, *TAPSLA* has featured articles by such renowned scholars in the field as David Singleton, Larissa Aronin, Jean-Marc Dewaele, Tammy Gregersen, and many others representing innovative movements in SLA research worldwide. The journal has become a venue for the exchange of ideas for academics at home and abroad, focusing on often un-researched issues and new currents in SLA studies. Especially today, when journal publications are seen as the most valued and highly recognized evidence of academic excellence, the perspectives for its rapid and successful development seem to be very promising. A guarantee of the journal's high standards is *TAPSLA*'s Editorial Board, which includes both Polish and foreign experts in the area, representing the wide range of research interests of its members. All updated information on the journal is available on the University of Silesia Institute of English webpage at www.ija.us.edu.pl (via a special link) and the journal webpage at www.journals.us.edu.pl/index.php/TAPSLA.

The present issue opens with a fascinating insight into the significance of the “love factor” for late L2 proficiency development. In their paper “L2 Proficiency as a Function of Cultural Identity in Interlingual Couples” David Singleton and Simone Pfenninger offer a comprehensive review of a number of qualitative studies which demonstrate how significant the affective dimension can be both for the ultimate success in acquisition of L2 proficiency as well as for the adoption of cultural identity by one of the partners. The facilitative role of out-of-class immersion activities is presented by Jorge Pinto in the second article, entitled “Immersion Learning Activities: Developing Communicative Tasks in the

Community.” The author argues for the extension of the learning environment to the beyond-the-classroom sphere which allows for a more extensive development of learners’ communicative skills in L2. Although the research results are based on an L2 Portuguese course taught at the University of Lisbon, the implications seem to be universally applicable. The third paper, “Social Constraints of Aspirations for Second Language Achievement” by Joanna Rokita-Jaśkow, seeks an explanation for the relatively unambitious and vague aspirations of Polish vocational school English philology students, adding another perspective to the discussion on the role of learning environments. The perspective is narrowed down to the classroom environment in the fourth paper, “New School, the Same Old Rut? Action Research of Unsuccessful First-year Students in a High School” by Joanna Masoń-Budzyń. In order to formulate useful and experience-based suggestions, the author attempts to diagnose the sources of learners’ unsuccessful performance, looking at a number of potential contributing factors. The fifth article, “Rethink Your Old Teaching Methods: Designing a Pronunciation Course for Young Teenagers” by Dorota Lipińska, also focuses on a FL classroom environment, but the author’s interest revolves around the issue of EFL pronunciation teaching to 11- to 13-year-olds. Lamenting the inefficiency of both the teaching resources and the primary school syllabi, the author proposes her own ideas about how pronunciation could be taught, providing some suggestive evidence from speech production and speech perception tests. The subject of pronunciation learning is also the topic of the last paper in the issue, “Pronunciation Learning Environment: EFL Students’ Cognitions of In-class and Out-of-class Factors Affecting Pronunciation Acquisition” by Magdalena Szyszka. The author attempts to identify the most significant contributors to the learners’ ultimate pronunciation learning achievement, looking not only at the classroom environment and at teachers’ pronunciation, but also at the patterns encountered by the learners in their daily exposure to entertainment media.

If a common denominator were to be noted for the papers included in the present issue, the dimension of various learning environments would be a good candidate. The authors have attempted to show in what way the widely understood context in which learning and acquisition takes place exerts an influence on learners’ ultimate L2 performance and success. We hope that this issue will be of interest to all researchers working in the field of second language acquisition. At the same time, we would like to invite Polish and foreign academics to share their scholarly research with us by submitting their work to the journal *Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition*, published by the prestigious Polish academic publisher Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego (University of Silesia Press).

Danuta Gabryś-Barker
Adam Wojtaszek